

DECLARATION ON THE PEACE PROCESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The European Council attaches great significance to the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid, which has launched a process of negotiations on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 which should lead to a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question. On the basis of the principles which have long governed their position, the Community and its member States are determined to continue to undertake all possible efforts alongside the United States and the Soviet Union to support this process. In Madrid they pledged their constructive partnership in all phases of the negotiations.

The European Council considers it of vital importance that the momentum gained at Madrid is not dissipated on procedural matters. It noted that the second round of bilateral negotiations has been convened in Washington. These negotiations should be pursued in good faith by all parties. Only then may the way be opened to movement on substance and meaningful confidence building measures. The European Council considers a halt to Israel's settlement activity in the Occupied Territories an essential contribution to creating the stable environment which progress in the negotiations requires. Renunciation of the Arab trade boycott is another.

With regard to the situation in the Occupied Territories, it is important that both sides show restraint and that Israel abide by the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The European Council looks forward to a tangible improvement in the situation in these territories, even before the putting in place of interim or other arrangements. In this respect it noted reports indicating that since the Conference in Madrid, the level of violence there has diminished. Indeed, this Conference has led to an atmosphere of hope, both in the Occupied Territories and elsewhere, which should not be disappointed.

The European Council reaffirms the commitment of the Community and its member States to make an active practical contribution to progress in the multilateral phase of the negotiations on regional cooperation. It expresses the hope that all parties in the region will participate in these negotiations. The European Council considers that the bilateral and multilateral agendas should go hand in hand, each one reinforcing the other. However, regional cooperation cannot progress faster than movement towards a political settlement. Given its close ties with all the parties involved, the Community and its member States are determined to remain in close contact with all participants and to do all they can to promote significant steps in the direction of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement.

DECLARATION ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION

The European Council took note of the decision of the Republics of Byelorussia, Ukraine and Russia to form a "Commonwealth of independent States", which other Republics have been invited to join. It also took note of President Gorbachev's statement on 9 December 1991.

The European Council underlines the necessity for a constructive dialogue among all parties concerned to ensure that the process of transformation of the Soviet Union, which has entered a crucial phase, continues in a peaceful, democratic and orderly manner.

The European Council welcomes the fact that the three Republics engaged in this comprehensive process of change have declared that they mutually recognise and respect each other's territorial integrity and the inviolability of the borders existing in the context of their Commonwealth.

The European Council is pleased to note that these Republics have at the same time reaffirmed their readiness to respect the international commitments of the Soviet Union and to ensure single control of nuclear weapons on their territory.

The European Council recalls the importance which the Community and its member States attach to respect for and implementation by all Republics of all provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and other relevant provisions of the CSCE regarding human rights and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. It also recalls that according to these provisions, the frontiers of all States in Europe are inviolable and can only be changed by peaceful means and agreement. Furthermore, the Community and its member States attach particular importance to necessary measures being taken without delay at the level of the Republics concerned to put into effect the agreements in the field of arms control, nuclear non-proliferation and the effective control and security of nuclear weapons. The Community and its member States also subscribe to the principle that Republics acceding to sovereignty should, for their part, respect the obligations deriving from the external debt of the Soviet Union.

At a moment when these Republics express democratically and peacefully their will to accede to full sovereignty, the Community and its member States wish to open with them, in a spirit of cooperation, a dialogue regarding the development of their mutual relationship.

The European Council also expresses the wish that these Republics develop among themselves the structures of cooperation required to facilitate their insertion in the international community under conditions appropriate to ensure the security, stability and legitimate fulfilment of all.

DECLARATION ON RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

The European Council notes with concern that manifestations of racism and xenophobia are steadily growing in Europe, both in the member States of the Community and elsewhere.

The European Council stresses the undiminished validity of international obligations with regard to combating discrimination and racism to which the member States have committed themselves within the framework of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the CSCE.

The European Council recalls the Declaration against racism and xenophobia issued by the European Parliament, Council and Commission on 11 June 1986 and, reaffirming its Declaration issued in Dublin on 26 June 1990, expresses its revulsion against racist sentiments and manifestations. These manifestations, including expressions of prejudice and violence against foreign immigrants and exploitation of them, are unacceptable.

The European Council expresses its conviction that respect for human dignity is essential to the Europe of the Community and that combating discrimination in all its forms is therefore vital to the European Community, as a community of States governed by the rule of law. The European Council therefore considers it necessary that the Governments and Parliaments of the member States should act clearly and unambiguously to counter the growth of sentiments and manifestations of racism and xenophobia.

The European Council asks Ministers and the Commission to increase their efforts to combat discrimination and xenophobia, and to strengthen the legal protection for third country nationals in the territories of the member States.

Lastly, the European Council notes that, in connection with the upheavals in Eastern Europe, similar sentiments of intolerance and xenophobia are manifesting themselves in extreme forms of nationalism and ethnocentrism. The policies of the Community and its member States towards the countries concerned will aim to discourage strongly such manifestations.

Declaration of the Member States of  
Western European Union issued on the  
occasion of the 46th European Council meeting on  
9 and 10 December 1991 at Maastricht

The Member States of WEU welcome the development of the European security and defence identity. They are determined, taking into account the role of WEU as the defence component of the European Union and as the means to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance, to put the relationship between WEU and the other European states on a new basis for the sake of stability and security in Europe. In this spirit, they propose the following:

States which are members of the European Union are invited to accede to WEU on conditions to be agreed in accordance with Article XI of the modified Brussels Treaty, or to become observers if they so wish. Simultaneously, other European member states of NATO are invited to become associate members of WEU in a way which will give them the possibility to participate fully in the activities of WEU.

The member states of WEU assume that treaties and agreements corresponding with the above proposals will be concluded before December 31, 1992.